

for alwey, of alle thinges, the nature of hem ne may nat ben bettre than his biginning; for which I may concluden, by right verray resoun, that thilke that is biginning of alle thinges, thilke same thing is soverein good in his substance. **Boecc.** Thou hast seyde rightfully, quod I.

Philosophie.

AT we han graunted, quod she, that the soverein good is blisfulnesse. And that is sooth, quod I.

THANNE, quod she, moten we nedes graunten and confessen that thilke same soverein good be God. **Certes**, quod I, I ne may nat denyne ne withstonde the resouns purposed; and I see wel that it folweth by strengthe of the premisses.

NOKE now, quod she, yif this be proved yit more fermly thus: that ther ne mowen nat ben two soverein goodes that ben dyverse amonge hemself. For certes, the goodes that ben dyverse amonges hemself, that oon nis nat that that other is; thanne ne may neither of hem ben parfit, so as either of hem lakketh toother. But that that nis nat parfit, men may seen apertly that it nis nat soverein. The thinges, thanne, that ben sovereinly goode, ne mowen by no wey ben dyverse. But I have wel concluded that blisfulnesse and God ben the soverein good; for whiche it mot nedes ben, that soverein blisfulnesse is soverein divinitee. **Nothing**, quod I, nis more soothfast than this, ne more ferme by resoun; ne a more worthy thing than God may nat ben concluded.

ADON these thinges thanne, quod she, right as thise geometriens, whan they han shewed hir proposicions, ben wont to bringen in thinges that they clepen porismes, or declaraciouns of forseide thinges, right so wole I yewe thee heer as a corollarie, or a mede of coroune, forwhy, for as moche as by the getinge of blisfulnesse men ben maked blisful, and blisfulnesse is divinitee: thanne is it manifest and open, that by the getinge of divinitee men ben maked blisful. Right as by the getinge of justice they ben maked just, & by the getinge of sapience they ben maked wyse: right so, nedes, by the semblable resoun, whan they han geten divinitee, they ben maked goddes. Thanne is every blisful man God; but certes, by nature, ther nis but o God; but, by the participacioun of divinitee, ther ne let ne desturbeth nothing that ther ne ben manye goddes. **This is**, quod I, a fair thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wolt; be it porisme or corollarie, or mede of coroune or declaringes.

CERTES, quod she, nothing nis fayrer than is the thing that by reyseide thinges. **What thing?** quod I. **O**, quod she, as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges, it were for to witen whether that alle these thinges maken or conjoynen as a maner body of blisfulnesse, by dyversitee of parties or of membres; or elles, yif that any of alle thilke thinges be swich that it accomplishe by himself the substance of blisfulnesse, so that alle these othere thinges ben referred and brought to blisfulnesse, that is to seyn, as to the cheef of hem. **I wolde**, quod I, that thou makedest me cleerly to understonde what thou seydest, & that thou recordedest me the forseide thinges.

HAVE I nat juged, quod she, that blisfulnesse is good? **Yis**, forsothe, quod I; and that soverein good.

ADDE thanne, quod she, thilke good, that is maked blisfulnesse, to alle these forseide thinges; for thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben soverein suffisaunce, thilke selve is soverein power, soverein reverence, soverein cleernesse or noblesse, and soverein delyt. **Conclusio.** **What** seyest thou thanne of alle these thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and these othere thinges; ben they thanne as membres of blisfulnesse, or ben they referred and brought to soverein good, right as alle thinges that ben brought to the cheif of hem? **I understonde wel**, quod I, what thou purposest to seke; but I desire for to herkne that thou shewe it me.

ASK now thus the discrecioun of this questioun, quod she. Yif alle these thinges, quod she, weren membres to felicitie, than weren they dyverse that oon from that other; and swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that dyverse membres compounen a body. **Certes**, quod I, it hath wel ben shewed heer bifore, that alle these thinges ben alle o thing.

THANNE ben they none membres, quod she; for elles it sholde seme that blisfulnesse were conjoyned al of on membre allone; but that is a thing that may nat be don. **This thing**, quod I, nis nat doutous; but I abyde to herknen the remnaunt of thy questioun.

HIS is open and cleer, quod she, that alle othere thinges ben referred & brought to good, for therefore is suffisaunce required, for it is demed to ben good; and forthy is power required, for men trowen also that it be good; & this same thing mowen we thinken & conjecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt.

Thanne is soverein good the somme and the cause of al that aughte ben desired; forwhy thilke thing that withholdeth no good in itself, ne semblaunce of good, it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne required. And the contrarie: for though that thinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode, al gates, yif men wene that ben goode, yit ben they desired as though that they weren verrayliche goode. And therfor is it that men oughten to wene by right, that bountee be the soverein fyn, and the cause of alle the thinges that ben to requeren. But certes, thilke that is cause for which men requeren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thing be most desired. As thus: yif that a wight wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desired nat so mochel the moevinge to ryden, as the effect of his hele. Now thanne, sin that alle thinges ben required for the grace of good, they ne ben nat desired of alle folk more thanne the same good. But we han graunted that blisfulnesse is that thing, for whiche that alle these othere thinges ben desired; thanne is it thus: that, certes, only blisfulnesse is required and desired. By whiche thing it sheweth cleerly, that of good and of blisfulnesse is al oon & the same substance. **I see nat**, quod I, wherfore that men mighten discorden in this.

AND we han shewed that God & verray blisfulnesse is al oo thing. **That** is sooth, quod I.

THANNE mowen we conclude sikerly, that the substance of God is set in thilke same good, and in non other place.

Metre X.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti.

COMETH ALLE togider now, ye that ben yeaught and ybounde with wikkede cheynes, by the deceivable delyt of erthely thinges enhabitinge in your thought! Her shal ben the reste of your labours, heer is the havene stable in peysible quiete; this allone is the open refut to wrecches. **Glosa.** This is to seyn, that ye that ben combred and deceived with worldely affectiouns, cometh now to this soverein good, that is God, that is refut to hem that wolen comen to him. **Textus.** Alle the thinges that the river Tagus yeveth yow with his goldene gravails, or elles alle the thinges that the river Hermus yeveth with his rede brinke, or that Indus yeveth, that is next the hote party of the world, that medleth the grene stones with the whyte, ne sholde nat cleeren the lookinge of your thought, but hyden rather your blinde corages with:

in hir derkenesse. Al that lyketh yow heer, and excyteth & moeveth your thoughtes, the erthe hath norished it in hise lowe caves. But the shyninge, by whiche the heavens is governed and whennes he hath his strengthe, that eschueh the derke overthrowinge of the sowle; and whoso may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, he shal wel seyn, that the whyte bemes of the sonne ne ben nat cleer.

Prose XI.

Assentior, inquam.
Boecc.

ASSENTE ME, quod I; for alle these thinges ben strongly bounden with right ferme resouns. **Philosophie.** How mochel wilt thou preysen it, quod she, yif that thou knowe what thilke good is? **I wol preysen it**, quod I, by prys withouten ende, yif it shal bityde me to knowe also togider God that is good.

CERTES, quod she, that shal I do thee by verray resoun, yif that thou thinges that I have concluded a litel herbifore dwellen only in hir first graunting. **They dwellen** graunted to thee, quod I; this is to seyn, as who seith: I graunte thy forseide conclusiouns.

HAVE I nat shewed thee, quod she, that the thinges that ben required of many folkes ne ben nat verray goodes ne parfite, for they ben dyverse that oon fro that othere; and so as ech of hem is lakkinge to other, they ne han no power to bringen a good that is ful and absolut? But thanne at erst ben they verray good, whanne they ben gadered togider alle into o forme & into oon wirkinge, so that thilke thing that is suffisaunce, thilke same be power, and reverence, and noblesse, and mirthe; and forsothe, but yif alle these thinges ben alle oon same thing, they ne han nat wherby that they mowen ben put in the nnumber of thinges that oughten ben required or desired. **It is shewed**, quod I; ne herof may ther no man douten.

THE thinges thanne, quod she, that ne ben no goodes whanne they ben dyverse, & whan they biginnen to ben alle oon thing thanne ben they goodes, ne comth it hem nat thanne by the getinge of unitee, that they ben maked goodes? **So it semeth**, quod I.

AT al thing that is good, quod she, grauntest thou that it be good by the participacioun of good or no? **I graunte it**, quod I.